

CAI  
MI

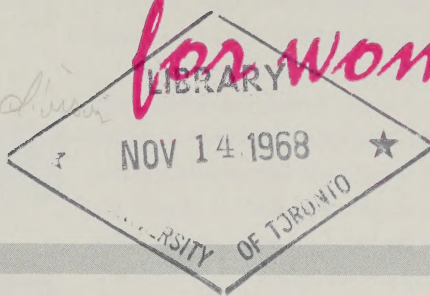
- Z115

# DIAN OPPORTUNITIES

Government  
Publications

*for women*

*Immigration Division*





**FOR WOMEN**





## *The Woman's Role*

Throughout its relatively short history Canada has placed a large share of the responsibility for national growth and development on the shoulders of the women who landed on its shores. It has granted them the freedom of a rugged and expanding country. In return, it has expected great things from them.

In the 18th and 19th centuries women laboured as hard as the men they had accompanied to this land. They established homes and families under the most difficult condi-

tions. They set up and administered rudimentary social services, charities and hospital facilities. They were largely responsible for the education of the young people.

Today you are not likely to encounter physical hardships in Canada but you will still find a stimulating challenge. Opportunities for women have never been greater. They are making steady inroads into business and professional fields formerly reserved for men. New careers are constantly opening up as the country expands to meet the technological challenge of this century. More women than ever before are working at more interesting and demanding jobs.

In the home, too, the responsibilities of the wife and mother have increased. Today it requires a strong personality, an active and alert mind, to maintain a happy, healthy household in the face of the pressure of outside interests. This responsibility rests with the homemaker. At the same time she is playing a steadily growing part in improving the lot of others in the broader community around her.

How are Canadian women meeting this challenge? Would you enjoy living among them, doing the things they do? What is Canada like today for the women who live in it?





## Canada Today

The scientific wonders of this age have reduced to a minimum the physical impact of Canada upon its new arrivals. A transportation network second to none has scaled down the immensity of the country to manageable size. Today you can cross Canada by air in eight hours. Canadians spend more per capita on their highway system than almost any other country in the world.

Even the weather, varying widely as it does from region to region and from season to season, has been modified by technology. Although most of the country experiences cold weather during several months of the year neither temperatures nor the accompanying snow cause a great deal of discomfort. Almost all homes, schools, factories and other buildings are centrally heated and maintained at about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. In the summer months air conditioning units help to moderate the temperature.

Snow is removed efficiently and quickly from both city streets and country highways by the large force of special equipment maintained

by almost all cities, towns and provinces.

Miracle synthetic fabrics and practical designing have brought about a revolution in the outdoor clothing Canadians wear in winter. All members of the family can be outfitted in warm outdoor clothing that is light in weight, attractive and comfortable.



## The Well-Dressed Woman

From October until April the primary consideration in dress must be protection from the cold and wet but women are women the world over and Canadian women are as fashion-conscious as any. In fact, Canadians probably enjoy summer clothes far more than women do in more clement countries.

Canadian couturier fashions are a fairly recent innovation but the field is expanding quickly as more and more women have the money and desire to possess Canadian originals.

For the most part, however, the average woman builds her wardrobe from ready-to-

---

After a pleasant walk, mother and son relax in a city park.





wear fashions purchased at relatively low cost in department stores or smaller, more exclusive, specialty shops. Many women supplement these purchases with clothes they sew themselves. This wardrobe is, of necessity, seasonal in character and ranges from light summer dresses to a cloth or fur winter coat.

Leisure clothes make up an important part of most women's wardrobes, partly because Canadians are noticeably casual in their dress, and also because they engage in a great deal of recreational activity.



### At Play

While Canada is world-famous for its winter sports – hockey, skiing, figure skating, and curling – the other seasons also provide wonderful opportunities for outdoor exercise. Throughout most of the country there is a profusion of fresh-water lakes and rivers and these, in conjunction with coastal waters of the Atlantic and Pacific, have contributed to the popularity of swimming, boating, fishing and water-skiing.

The majority of Canadian women are sports-minded and proficient in at least one or

two outdoor sports. Among the most popular activities are skating, swimming, golfing, skiing and curling. These are activities traditionally requiring membership in exclusive and expensive clubs but today the picture has changed so that, after purchasing equipment, the average person can participate. The resorts, lodges and clubhouses associated with most of these sports offer a wonderful opportunity to meet and know people with similar interests.

Non-competitive sports that can be enjoyed by all ages are also popular with Canadians. In the summer months thousands of families take to the roads with tents and trailers to enjoy the natural beauty of the country. National parks and camp sites offer these travellers convenient sanctuary.

Recreation tends to be a family affair in Canada whether it is camping, skating or enjoying the new motorized toboggans. Many families feel that outdoor activities contribute to family solidarity and so they make full use of recreation areas and services located within their own community. These facilities include parks, arenas, tennis courts, swimming pools, baseball diamonds and football fields, and are

---

Fore! In recent years there has been a tremendous increase in the number of women playing golf in Canada.





provided free or at a nominal cost. Organized sports in these community recreation areas depend largely upon the voluntary assistance and supervision of parents and other interested adults.

If you happen to live in one of the new housing complexes springing up on the edges of larger urban centres you will probably find many recreational facilities located in the buildings. Many of these new apartments provide both indoor and outdoor swimming pools, sauna baths, tennis courts, games rooms and a fully-equipped childrens' play area free of charge for their tenants.



### **At Home**

A few facts about Canadian housing accommodation will soon become apparent to the new arrival. In the first place, standards are generally high – almost all urban dwellings are in good repair, centrally heated and equipped with modern appliances and plumbing. Also, Canadians are a nation of homeowners, with less than one-third of all family units living in apartments or flats.

In recent years there has been a trend toward more diversification of housing in major cities

that may, in time, reduce the percentage of homeowners. Already, in most urban communities you may choose between single family homes, apartments or flats, duplexes or doubles, and rows of adjoining homes usually called town houses or garden homes. Sometimes all of these types of accommodation are grouped in one housing complex or community which is usually located on the fringe of a large city. Of course, housing in smaller centres is not as varied.

Since Canada is such an immense country with its population spread out accordingly, the automobile has become a very important factor in the Canadian way of life. One Canadian in four owns an automobile. Canadians average more than one car for each family unit and this has enabled them to establish homes a considerable distance from the place of occupation of the breadwinner. Most of the new homes now being built are located in the suburbs. So far, these suburban families have continued to rely mainly on private transportation but as commuting distances increase and highways become more crowded better public transportation systems are being provided.

In the downtown areas the country's rising standard of living is reflected in the mushrooming of luxury high-rise apartments. Twenty-



storey and higher buildings have already been constructed in six Canadian cities and others are planned. In the past 10 years \$4 billion has been spent on apartment construction, a good deal of it on frills and extras. The new luxury high-rise apartments provide their tenants with the services of a doorman, receptionist, high-speed elevators, laundry rooms with television sets installed, wall-to-wall carpeting and party lounges for entertaining.

As you can see, the types of accommodation are extremely varied and there is something to suit almost any taste or budget. Choosing a new home is not a step to be taken lightly and in most cases you will do well to accept temporary accommodation on a short-term basis during the initial period of adjustment. When either you or the head of the family have found a suitable job, have oriented yourself to Canadian prices and wages and have become familiar with the city, you will be better prepared to find a home that meets your requirements.



### **At Work**

If you are coming to Canada with the intention of obtaining a job it is reassuring to know that

today almost everyone who wants to work can find employment. There is a minimum of unemployment in the country at the present time. Wages and earnings have never been higher and, as has already been pointed out, the chances of a woman finding a challenging and rewarding career in an exciting new field have never been better.

At the same time it is well to realize that rapid industrialization and especially the technological advances of the past decade have brought radical changes in the Canadian labour market. The number of jobs open to a person with no special training or skill is dwindling rapidly. The best jobs are reserved for those who have combined high educational qualifications with a number of years of practical experience in their particular field.

As yet, Canada has been unable to train enough skilled workers and professionals in certain fields to meet the demand for their services. For women some of the most seriously understaffed fields are those of nursing, especially psychiatric nursing, social work, and some clerical occupations.

No matter what your job you will be part of the prevailing trend towards the employment of ever increasing numbers of women in the Canadian work force. More than one-

third of all Canadian women work, as compared to 40 per cent of those in the United Kingdom and 38 per cent in the United States.

Nevertheless, the percentage of the female population that is working is climbing fast and has, in fact, risen from 12 per cent at the turn of the century to 34 per cent today. Only ten years ago less than a quarter (23 per cent) of Canadian women worked outside the home, compared to almost one-third today.

Most of these recruits to the labour force are married women whose children have reached school-age. They are typical of what has become known as "the back-to-work movement". Most of them are working to raise the standard of living within their own family, usually towards one specific economic goal such as the down payment on a home.

Because their numbers have been, until recently, fairly small, women at work may encounter some problems. One of these is the relative scarcity of day-care facilities for pre-school children. Some mothers prefer to make private arrangements for the care of their children either through relatives or neighbours or by hiring a housekeeper.

In practice too, women find their energies channelled into certain fields of employment. Nearly one-third (28 per cent) of all working

women, for example, are in jobs that can be classified as clerical, i.e. secretaries, typists, or clerks. Other traditionally feminine occupations are in services, sales and communications. In the manufacturing industries, textile and clothing establishments and manufacturers of electrical supplies are the largest employers of women.

The majority of women who join the Canadian labour force after emigrating from other countries have, in the past, been attracted to manufacturing and service industries in almost equal proportions. Recently the swing has been towards the fields of transportation, trade and finance.

Professionals make up about 15 per cent of the Canadian female labour force and of these, three out of every four earn their living as either a teacher or nurse. Their salaries and those of two other popular professions – social workers and librarians – have reached fairly high levels. To practice their professions, newcomers must meet standards set for various occupations by provincial governments and professional associations. Your Immigration Counsellor will be pleased to discuss this matter with you.

A family from the Netherlands moving into their first Canadian home.





The chances for a woman in any of these professions to advance to a senior position and receive a correspondingly high salary are also excellent. Sixteen per cent of Canadian women school teachers earn more than \$5,000 annually. An even higher percentage of librarians (one-quarter) earn more than \$5,000 annually.

The fields of social work, library science and dietetics have, since their inception, been mainly occupied by women. These professions will need to greatly increase their ranks in the near future. Other fields which will require large numbers of trained women shortly are the relatively new ones of scientific and engineering technology.

The single fastest growing area of female employment is that of clerical work. This includes jobs such as file clerk, requiring a minimum of vocational training, and ranges up to typist, stenographer and secretary, jobs requiring considerable vocational skill and training. Here again the highest salaries are paid to those with the most experience, training and skill.

Since salaries vary widely from one part of Canada to another even for the same job it is difficult to make valid comparisons between

occupations. Let us consider, however, the woman who comes to Canada with some experience in her particular field and finds a job in Toronto, Ontario. As a typist she would earn about \$65 a week, as compared to a secretary who would make about \$83 a week, or a bookkeeper who would earn about \$80. As a salesclerk she might earn about \$45 a week, approximately the same as if she were employed by a firm manufacturing clothing or food and beverages. If she were hired by a manufacturer of electrical supplies the wages would be higher, approximately \$60 a week.

There is a very strong current of upward mobility in Canadian employment. Most Canadians expect to move up into better jobs as their skills and experience increase. For the newcomer who needs time to familiarize herself with the language and customs this fact merits consideration and may dictate accepting a stop-gap job until a more suitable one can be found. For the person who has, or is willing to work to acquire, a skill or training there should be no difficulty in eventually obtaining work which will be both enjoyable and financially rewarding. However, your chances for advancement will depend to a great degree on your fluency in English or French.





## In the Home

Housekeeping in a typical Canadian home is both an art and a science. An awesome assortment of labour-saving devices, equipment and machinery is available to challenge your engineering skills. The well-equipped kitchen contains, in addition to a refrigerator, stove and often dishwasher, small appliances which will: toast bread, mix cakes, blend drinks, squeeze oranges, boil water, make coffee, sharpen knives, and open cans.

Household drudgery has been largely eliminated by the automation of chores such as washing clothes and cleaning floors. Automatic laundry equipment requiring only the flick of a switch will wash, starch and dry clothes. Electric vacuum cleaners, carpet sweepers, floor cleaners, waxers and polishers mean no more scrubbing on hands and knees.

"Pushbutton housekeeping", while undeniably brightening the lives of thousands of women, does present some problems. Not every family can afford all or even most of these labour-saving devices of course. Almost all housewives (98 per cent) have a refrigerator, most (86 per cent) have a gas or electric stove,

about 75 per cent have a vacuum cleaner. Automatic laundry equipment is used by about 23 per cent of housewives.

The fortunate housewife who owns a number of appliances will spend considerable time and money keeping these devices in good running order. For this reason she is wise to purchase her appliances from reliable dealers who will interpret operating instructions and provide service and repairs.

It is not necessary to pay the full purchase price immediately of appliances or other home furnishings. Most large stores offer instalment plans or charge accounts to their customers. Consumer credit, used wisely, can add a great deal of pleasure to your life in Canada.

The rise of automated housekeeping has paralleled the decline of domestic help in Canada. Very few families today have the full-time help of a maid, chauffeur, cook or other domestic. Most women, if they want help in the home, get along with periodic visits from a regular cleaning woman or char who is paid an hourly rate.

Even the woman with no help in the home and a minimum of electrical gadgets has access



---

A former resident of Austria, this young woman is employed by a large library in a major Canadian city.







to plenty of time and step-savers. In most communities public laundries and dry-cleaning establishments provide excellent service. In the stores the shelves and freezing counters are loaded with convenience foods that can save a busy mother hours of cooking time.

In fact, modern women have saved so much time that today they are faced with a new problem – what to do with their new-found leisure. The combination of labour-saving equipment and products, smaller families and smaller, more convenient homes has made housekeeping less than a full-time job for many women.

This fact is the basis of the “back-to-work” movement referred to earlier. Most of the women who choose to work for personal reasons wait until their children have reached school-age and then look for employment even though this often requires a period of re-training. Some professions have recognized this trend and now offer refresher courses to their members, among them nurses, teachers and home economists.



### **In the Community**

As yet, however, the working woman is the

exception rather than the rule and two-thirds of the female population are not gainfully employed. Many of these women are making a very real contribution to their community through voluntary welfare services.

The Canadian government has adopted as its role in social welfare programs the establishment of broad general principles and the provision of a large share of the financial costs. This leaves a great deal up to individual communities and agencies. Most of these are local branches of national associations and operate with a minimum of professional staff. They rely largely upon volunteers to carry out their programs under supervision and to raise money within the community to assist their projects.

These volunteers are almost always women, usually with no special training but a willingness to make themselves useful in the community. Among the jobs they have taken on are assisting senior citizens with housework and shopping, providing transportation for children and older people, visiting shut-ins and hospital patients and helping welfare families find better housing.

Most large cities have a central welfare

---

There is a great demand for nurses in Canada.





agency which is pleased to answer enquiries from prospective volunteers and help them find a rewarding and suitable job within their community.

Women's traditional ties with church and school provide other opportunities for useful activities. Most Canadian schools operate in conjunction with an organization designed to provide a liaison between parents and teachers. This organization, called the Home and School or Parent Teacher Association, is particularly valuable to the new arrival who is trying to familiarize herself with the Canadian educational system. Its monthly meetings are attended by both parents and teachers and usually feature a talk on some aspect of the curriculum.

The PTA also stages various special functions during the school year which will probably interest your children. These include skating parties, skate exchange sales, private movie showings and sightseeing expeditions.

Like most other non-profit organizations the PTA welcomes the assistance of any member in its fund-raising or entertainment ventures. One of the quickest and most satisfactory ways of getting to know other parents in the school area is to volunteer your services even if it only means baking a dozen cookies.

Almost all churches consider the promotion of fellowship and guidance to be one of their primary purposes and they have set up various organizations to provide these services for the women of their congregation. Some of these associations are study groups, some fund-raising groups but all welcome the new member warmly.

Self-improvement has become a very popular goal of the modern woman and there are many directions it may take. Adult education courses are offered on weekday evenings in the majority of urban centres. Here you can learn to arrange flowers, sew, paint, or make-up your face. For the more serious-minded there are courses in academic subjects at the secondary school level. These are available to anyone at a nominal charge.

The newcomer who has not mastered English or French will almost certainly want to attend courses offered throughout Canada in most centres. Classes are available at various levels of proficiency and are particularly useful to the housewife who may not, like her husband, use English or French every day in the business world. Unless she works to improve

---

This well-equipped kitchen is typical of those found in many Canadian homes.





her command of the language she may, in time, find she has lost some measure of communication with the rest of her family who are becoming increasingly at home in a new tongue.

You may also choose leisure-time activities solely for the pleasure you can obtain from them. Depending upon its size and resources a Canadian community may offer any or all of the following: movie theatres, art galleries, museums, opera and ballet performances and stage plays.

Many, if not most Canadian women enjoy card-playing and often form small groups which meet regularly in each others' homes. Public card parties and "bingos" sponsored by various organizations are features of community life. Sewing, handicrafts and painting are other popular pastimes.

The serious business of feeding and clothing her family still requires considerable time and effort on the part of the average housewife. Canadian women have a great deal to say about how the family income is spent. It is estimated that women spend seventy cents of every dollar of disposable income.

Although food costs are reasonable, standards are extremely high owing mostly to strict enforcement of grading and marketing regulations. Any complaint about sanitation stand-

ards or suspected impurities in products is quickly checked and, where necessary, corrected.

Most Canadian women prefer to make the bulk of their food purchases during one weekly visit to a large chain store or supermarket as it is known. These supplies are supplemented by purchases from bread and milk salesmen who visit door-to-door daily. The weekly shopping trip has only become possible since the refrigerator became a standard appliance in the home.

Supermarkets are an innovation which may on first acquaintance seem rather forbidding if only because of their immense size. Many newcomers prefer to patronize smaller local grocery stores which are often run by other recent immigrants to Canada who are familiar with several languages. These stores offer friendly, personal service and many of them specialize in food products and ingredients familiar to a particular nationality.

For the venturesome, though, the supermarket offers an adventure in Canadian eating and an introduction to the Canadian way of life. Here, the aisles are wide, the lights are

---

Many women serve their communities as volunteers in various endeavours.



bright and wire carts are available for the shopper to carry her purchases up to the check-out counter. Products range from assorted staples to imported delicacies. Frozen foods occupy large, deep bins; meat is arranged in cases running the full length of the store and fresh fruits and vegetables occupy about one-quarter of the store's area. Most fruits and vegetables are available as fresh produce throughout the year and the remainder, such as strawberries, asparagus and pineapples make extended seasonal appearances.

Nearly one-third of the shelving space in supermarkets is occupied by non-edible products such as household cleaning supplies, toys, magazines, grooming and health supplies. This makes it possible for the housewife to accomplish most of her errands in one store and cuts down her shopping time.

Drive-in shopping centres also help to promote efficient, enjoyable shopping. These clusters of community services usually include one or two supermarkets, a department store, bank, barber shop etc., and are surrounded by large parking areas.

The ability to drive an automobile is a definite asset in this country of drive-ins. Canadian women use the family car or have one of their own to perform a multitude of

tasks including the week's grocery shopping, visits to the laundry or library and chauffeuring husbands to the bus or train and children to appointments.

The convenience of suburban shopping has made a planned trip to the centre of the city a special occasion for many women. Let us join Mrs. John Canuck living in a modern suburban bungalow, on one of these expeditions.

Alone, or with a group of friends, she drives downtown early in the morning, leaving the children with a babysitter or relative. Usually she relies on private transportation. In some instances she combines private and public transportation, by driving to a large parking lot located near a main subway or bus route. If she drives into the city centre she will park her car in a public parking lot or car park, a multi-storey structure providing thousands of parking spaces under one roof.

A wide range of shops compete for the consumers' dollar here in the centre of the city. Large department stores, usually about half a dozen in a medium-sized city, offer every conceivable product. In one of these Mrs. Canuck might purchase a dress for herself, a tie for her husband, toys for the children, a rug for the house. She might finish her shopping by buying a pound of candy or a dozen



cookies to carry home. Most large stores provide free delivery service.

After lunch in any one of several nearby restaurants, Mrs. Canuck might wish to continue her shopping by visiting smaller specialty shops. Or she might visit a current exhibition at the local art gallery. Another alternative is a movie or matinee performance of a stage play or concert.

On her way home she may stop at one of the convenient restaurants providing hot ready-cooked meals in disposable cardboard containers. Or, if she is lucky, her husband may have prepared the dinner already, a practice not unheard of in a land where fathers are expected to participate in all aspects of child-rearing.

Being a housewife is not, of course, all fun and games and one of the most serious responsibilities of a mother is in helping her children to obtain the best possible education so that they may grow up to be self-reliant persons. In Canada children must attend school until they are either 15 or 16 years of age, depending upon the province in which they reside. This education is available free of charge below the university level and there is good reason for making the most of it since employment qualifications are rising steadily as automation

reduces the demand for unskilled labour.

Owing to the absence of a central or federal authority over education there is a remarkable diversity of school systems and regulations across Canada. For the most part, schools are administered by local Boards of Education which are, in turn, governed by the Department of Education of that particular province.

You will probably find that wherever you happen to live children enter the elementary school system at the age of five (or in some cases four) and progress through seven or eight grades until they are promoted to the secondary school system. During the early years all children are taught approximately the same material. A few, however, receive special attention in classes geared to their unique learning abilities. These include gifted children, slow learners or retarded children and those who have physical handicaps. These classes for exceptional children make it possible for almost all children to be fitted into the school system and to receive the benefits of as much learning as they can manage.

Secondary or high schools offer more specialized programs which make it possible for young people to concentrate on either academic or vocational, technical or commercial subjects. These courses range in length from two



to five years. After receiving his graduation diploma a student may choose to continue his education at one of more than 40 degree-granting universities or about 350 colleges, the majority of which are affiliated with universities.

If he prefers to develop a particular skill or trade he may continue his training at either a vocational centre or an institute of technology. All levels of government have made efforts to meet expected demands for skilled manpower by building new technical and vocational high schools, making major additions to others, and constructing other institutions exclusively for trades and technological students.

One well-known educator expects that within 10 years 70 per cent of high school graduates will proceed to further training and that the opportunities for such highly skilled persons are unlimited.

A few decades ago a university education was beyond the reach of all but a small percentage of the population but today one child in five who enter high school proceeds to university. This has come about largely through a marked increase in the amount of financial

aid available, including federal government loans.

As a mother you can play an important part in helping your child adjust to the Canadian school system. If he has to learn a new language you can enrol in adult classes and learn it along with him. If he feels strange at first you can help him to realize that this feeling will wear off very quickly as he makes new friends and becomes familiar with the school and neighbourhood. If the opportunity arises for your child to attend special classes you can encourage him to make the extra effort. You can also do your best to see that he is dressed as much like others in his age group as possible.

In a very short time you will probably be surprised to detect a new note of independence and self-reliance in your child's actions and then you will realize he is well on his way to becoming a Canadian.

Canadian children are encouraged to pursue a multitude of activities outside the classroom. Parents foster every spark of creative talent by providing lessons in skating, dancing, music, handicrafts and even baton-twirling for diminutive majorettes. Although private lessons are available most parents prefer to make use of community association facilities which charge only nominal fees.

---

Canadian supermarkets have greatly reduced the shopping time of the housewife.



Organized sports take up several hours weekly for most small boys who are members of hockey and baseball teams that operate according to big league regulations.

Both boys and girls belong to organizations like the world-wide Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements and, in addition, to various youth groups organized by the churches.

Mothers, who generally assume the major responsibility for escorting children to and from these engagements, sometimes ruefully refer to their role as that of "chauffeur". In spite of this they are appreciative, as you will be too, of opportunities their children are given in Canada to develop into talented, well-adjusted, healthy young citizens.

THIS BOOKLET IS ALSO PUBLISHED  
IN FRENCH

Printed in Canada

Cat. No. MP22-2/668



Canada

PREPARED BY  
CANADIAN GOVERNMENT  
IMMIGRATION DIVISION

1968

